3/22/88 98780-1

PRRC emerging trends

feb 88

© Published by the Princeton Religion Research Center

Vol. 10, No. 2

'Mainline' Churches Failing to Recover Loss of Adherents

PRINCETON, N.J. -- The percentage of adults who state a preference for "mainline" Protestant denominations continues to fall below the levels recorded in the 1960's and early and mid-1970's.

In the latest audit, based on 14,147 interviews in 1987, 9% chose a Methodist church, 6% Lutheran, 3% Presbyterian, and 2% Episcopalian. These figures are statistically about the same as those recorded in recent years, but represent a decided drop from audits conducted prior to the late 1970's.

The percentage of those stating a preference for a Baptist church has shown little change since 1967, when the audit was started.

It is important to bear in mind that these annual Gallup audits focus on *preference* and not *membership*.

Here is the trend for major Protestant groupings:

Protestant Church Preferences

	Baptist %	Methodist %	Lutheran %	Presbyterian %	Episcopalian %
1987	20	9	6	3	2
1986	20	9	5	2	2
1985	20	10	6	2	2
1984	20	9	7	2	3
1983	21	10	7	3	2
1982	19	10	6	4	2
1981	19	10	6	4	2
1980	19	10	6	4	2
1979	19	11	6	4	2
1978	19	11	6	4	2
1976	21	11	7	5	3
1975	20	11	7	5	3
1974	21	14	7	6	3
1969	20	14	7	6	3
1967	21	14	7	6	3

Little Change in Major Faiths

The 1987 audit also indicates little change in recent years in the relative strength of *major faiths* in this country, with 57% in the latest series of surveys giving their religious preference as Protestant, 28% as Roman Catholic, 2% as Jewish and 2% indicating their religious preference or affiliation to be The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons).

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)
Those who say they have no religious preference, 9%, matches the figure recorded in the four previous years. The current figure, however, is significantly higher than the 2% recorded in 1967. The annual audit of religious preference (for major faiths) was initiated by The Gallup Poll in 1947.

Here is the question and the findings for 1987:

What is your religious preference — Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, or an Orthodox Church such as the Greek or Russian Orthodox Church?

Religious Preferences

Protestant	57%
Roman Catholic	28
Jewish	2
Mormon (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)	2
Orthodox Church	*
Other	2
None	9

*Less than one percent.

Here is the four-decade trend. Specific figures for the Mormon and Orthodox Churches are omitted because of insufficient historical data, and are included under the "other" category.

Religious Preferences

	Protestant	Catholic	Jewish	Other	None
	%	%	%	%	%
-Yearly-					
1987	57	28	2	4	9
1986	58	27	2	4	9
1985	57	28	2	4	9
1984	57	28	2	4	9
1983	56	29	2	4	9
1982	57	29	2	4	8
1981	59	28	2	4	7
1980	61	28	2	2	7
1979	59	29	2	2	8
1977-78	60	29	2	1	8
1976	61	27	2	4	6
1975	62	27	2	4	6
1974	60	27	2	5	6
-By 5-year periods-					
1972	63	26	2	4	5
1967	67	25	3	3	2
1962	70	23	3	2	2
1957	66	26	3	1	3
1952	67	25	4	1	2
1947	69	20	5	1	6

NOTE: Results for some years do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Religion and Politics in the 1988 Campaign

Americans overwhelmingly support the principal of the separation of church and state and are concerned about possible effects of a minister or clergyman being elected president of the United States. But they do perceive some positive differences in the personal characteristics of a candidate who is a minister or clergyman compared to the typical politicians. These findings are from a survey conducted for TIMES MIRROR by The Gallup Organization in January.

The *Seculars* are most likely to express concerns about the separation of church and state in the United States. While 77% of all those surveyed agreed that "in our system of government, church and state should be separated," 97% of *Seculars* felt this way. *Moralists* were no less likely to hold this view (81%) than the general population.

Two out of three respondents (67%) in the total sample as well as among the *Moralists* agreed that "electing a minister or clergyman would create tension between religious groups in society," while three in four (76%) of the *Seculars* did. And seven in ten of all those surveyed agreed that a minister or clergyman would press his religious position on moral issues, while 78% of *Seculars* did.

Majorities of those surveyed agreed that a minister or clergyman would have higher moral standards (55%) and that he would be more honest than the typical politician (49%). *Seculars* were the least likely to agree with each of these statements (29% and 25% respectively), while greater proportions of *Moralists* agreed with them (63% and 57% respectively).

An analysis of the interrelationship of these factors shows that attitudes toward the separation of church and state and a concern about pressing a religious position on moral issues are the strongest factors explaining support for or opposition to a minister or clergyman running for president.

Following are the findings in tabular form, based on face-to-face personal interviews with a national sample of 2,109 adults during the period Jan. 8 to 17.

In general, how do you feel about a clergyman or minister running for president of the United States — do you think it is a good thing, a bad thing, or doesn't it make any difference?

Good thing	16%
Bad thing	39
Doesn't make any difference	41
Don't know	4
	100%

People give us different reasons for supporting or opposing the idea of a clergyman or minister running for president of the United States. I am going to read you some statements about religion and politics, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it.

	Completely agree	Mostly agree	Mostly disagree	Completely disagree	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%
A minister or clergyman would be more honest than the typical politician.	13	37	31	13	6
In our system of government, church and state should be separated.	48	29	12	5	6
A minister or clergyman would have higher moral standards than the typical politician.	16	38	27	12	7
A minister or clergyman's training and background would make him more able to deal with our nation's problems than the typical politician.	9	20	42	22	7
A minister or clergyman would press his religious position on moral issues.	25	44	20	5	6
Electing a minister or clergyman would create tension between religious groups in society.	26	41	21	6	6

Minister as Presidential Candidate?

Group/% of registered voters	Characteristics	Good thing	Bad thing	Makes no difference
Republicans		(%)	(%)	(%)
Enterprisers/10%	Affluent; educated; pro-business; anti-government; worry about deficit	11	38	47
Moralists/13%	Middle-aged; middle-income; anti-abortion; pro-school prayer & military	17	45	34
Independents				
Upbeats/10%	Young; optimistic; strongly patriotic; pro-government; like Reagan; worry about deficit	18	39	40
Disaffecteds/10%	Middle-aged; alienated; pessimistic; anti-government & business; pro-military	12	46	41
Followers/6%	Young; little faith in America or interest in politics; worry about unemployment	14	32	43
Seculars/7%	Middle-aged; educated; non-religious; non-militant; pro-personal freedoms	6	54	36
Democrats				
'60s Democrats/9%	Upper-middle-class; identify with '60s peace, civil rights and environmental movements	9	30	58
New Dealers/14%	Older; middle-income; religious; protectionist; pro-unions & government	20	39	38
Partisan Poor/12%	Militantly Democratic; pro-social spending; anti-tax hikes	23	26	44
Passive Poor/9%	Older; strong faith in America's institutions; pro-social spending; anti-communist	19	46	34
Total Sample	*(Don't Knows omitted throughout)*	16	39	41

(From a TIMES MIRROR survey of 2,109 U.S. adults, 18 and older, conducted by The Gallup Organization, January 8-17, 1988)

Church-College Graduates Happier in Marriages, Jobs

Oklahoma City (Jan. 7) — Money may not buy happiness, but when coupled with marriage, a college degree, a satisfying job and regular church attendance, it improves the odds considerably, according to a survey conducted by The Gallup Organization, Inc., of Princeton, New Jersey.

In a survey of over 1300 college graduates from the late 1970's and early 1980's, Gallup reports that over 90 percent are currently "at least fairly happy" with their lives.

However, in a comparison between public college graduates and alumni from private colleges affiliated with the Churches of Christ, striking differences are noted by Gallup.

The percentages reporting they were "very happy" with life was 36 percentage points higher among the church-college graduates.

The attitudinal study, commissioned by Oklahoma Christian College last fall, focused on life satisfaction, employment, volunteer work, politics, and contemporary issues among graduates of twelve participating colleges of comparable size in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Tennessee.

Married respondents of both groups surveyed also reported a much higher degree of overall happiness than single or divorced alumni based on four levels of contentment, according to Gallup.

Although the two survey groups' occupational profiles were nearly identical, the private college respondents showed a higher sense of satisfaction with their jobs, salaries, professional relationships, and chances of advancement.

Twenty-eight percent of all alumni surveyed indicated some post-graduate education, 36 percent reported having obtained advanced degrees and a majority stated they were currently in professional careers.

Frequent church-goers were 48 percentage points more likely to rate themselves as "very happy" than those either with erratic attendance or no record of attendance.

Private college married graduates also responded 28 percentage points higher in ranking their levels of marital happiness than the public group.

Voluntary service patterns revealed marked differences between the two groups. Over 90 percent of religious-college alumni reported they worked for their church as opposed to 56 percent of public institution graduates. The latter group, however, showed a higher incidence of voluntary work related to youth groups, and civic and social organizations.

The church-college graduates were also five times more likely to spend more than 15 hours weekly in voluntary work.

Both groups indicated a high degree of satisfaction with their college education as preparation for the work-world with a three-percentage point edge reported by private-college graduates, according to Gallup.

Bucking national trends, 75 percent of the total group surveyed were married, with a scant five percent indicating they were divorced.

Politically, over 90 percent of all alumni termed themselves either "conservative" or "middle of the road" with 46 percent reporting Republican Party registrations and 21 percent indicating Democratic affiliation. The remainder indicated either "independent" status or no political involvement.

Alcohol, Other Drug Use Measured

In lifestyle areas, alumni of public colleges were twice as likely to use alcohol and three times more likely to use drugs. Gallup also noted a 21 percentage point decrease in drug experimentation among public college graduates from their reported use patterns while students.

Sexual relations outside of marriage were considered wrong by 93 percent of frequent church-goers of both groups, but only by 55 percent who attended infrequently.

Financially, graduates of both sectors were doing well, with the majority indicating family salaries near the $50,000-a-year level.

Dr. J. Terry Johnson, President of Oklahoma Christian College, said the report was one of three commissioned by the Oklahoma City institution to determine how church-related college graduates fare in the work-a-day world.

"We are competitive in virtually all areas and entertain a dramatic edge in how well our graduates adapt to the challenges of jobs, marriage and voluntary service," said Johnson, adding that the survey also was dramatic proof that private, church-related colleges — such as the six cooperating in the Gallup study — are not at a disadvantage in effectively developing the abilities of their students.

Child Lures: A Guide to Prevent Abduction

The issue of missing children is one which concerns all of us. There is no element of society today that is untouched by this problem. But there are ways in which families and individuals can educate themselves and their loved ones on this subject, thus offering protection for their children and helping to curb the flow of such tragic incidents.

Kenneth Wooden is the founder of the National Coalition for Children's Justice and the National Child Victim Network. Wooden has written two books on injustices suffered by children, "Weeping in the Playtime of Others," and "The Children of Jonestown." His articles and books have prompted Congressional inquiries and legislation dealing with interstate commerce of children, the child pornography industry, foster care reform, the problem of missing and murdered children, and most recently, ritual abuse and Satanism.

Based on his research and interviews with convicted child molesters, murderers, pimps, and drug dealers, Wooden has written a booklet called "Child Lures: A Guide to Prevent Adduction." Every child who enters school has been taught that certain things are dangerous — moving cars, matches, electrical outlets, heights, swimming unattended, etc. Some educators and parents feel that teaching the dangers of molestation, abduction, and other forms of exploitation will cause unwarranted fear in youngsters. These reservations have proven to be unfounded in the CHILD LURES Prevention Program, where experiences readily understood by the child are used to teach safety/prevention concepts.

In his prevention booklet, Wooden emphasizes the lures used to entice children and the suggested approaches you may take in discussing the lures with children.. The lures generally fall into ten specific categories and are so basic to the safety of children that they must be taught alongside the alphabet and simple arithmetic. The ten basic lures are: Affection, Assistance, Authority, Bribery, Ego/Fame, Emergency, Games & Fun, Heroes, Jobs, Threats/Fears.

If you are interested in finding out what you can do to help protect our children, you may contact Kenneth Wooden, National Coalition for Children's Justice, 2998 Shelburne Road, Shelburne, Vermont 05482 — telephone number 802-985-8458.

EMERGING TRENDS is published monthly except July and August by the PRINCETON RELIGION RESEARCH CENTER. The Center, founded in 1977, is an inter-faith non-denominational research organization with headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey. The PRRC specializes in creative, actionable research, utilizing the worldwide attitudinal and behavioral facilities of Gallup International. The purpose of the PRRC is to gain a better understanding of the nature and depth of religious commitment in the U.S. and abroad and to explore ways this information can enable religious leaders to promote spiritual growth. A one-year subscription can be obtained for $30.00. Inquire: **Publications Department, P.O. Box 310, 53 Bank Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08542 (Telephone 609/924-9600). PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ADDRESS CHANGE.**

PRINCETON RELIGION RESEARCH CENTER
P.O. Box 310
53 Bank Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08542

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 175
Plainsboro, NJ
08536

Ms. Jeanne Long
Cong. Info. Serv.
4520 East-West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

First Class Mail